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The claim for independence

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1922

THE CLAIM FOR INDEPENDENCE

BY

C. F. ANDREWS

EMPIRES MUST PERISH TO DAY

as they have perished in the past, in order that free peoples may survive and realise their freedom. We have a signal instance of the fallacy of the 'imperial' idea in Italy and Austria. Last century, the subjection of Italy to Austria in one Empire made spiritual unity impossible. The Austrian Empire, with its Italian appendage, was a monstrosity. But now the relations between Italy and Austria have changed. Italy has come nobly to the help of Austria, in the hour of her greatest distress; and a spiritual unity is being found today, which is obliterating centuries of hate. The truth is, that the British Empire with its Indian appendage, is also a monstrosity. If the present unnatural relation between England and India continues, it can only lead, as it has done at such a rapid pace already to a continually increasing bitterness on both sides. But if the bond of subjection is finally and ultimately unloosed, : then mutual respect may succeed mutual hate. :

As. 8

Ganesh & Co.,
Publishers, Madras.



Bo-R. Kuisman





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THE CLAIM FOR INDEPENDENCE

WITHIN OR WITHOUT THE BRITISH EMPIRE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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WITHIN OR WITHOUT THE BRITISH EMPIRE

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As. 8.

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The Claim For Independence

WITHIN OR WITHOUT THE BRITISH EMPIRE

I

IMPERIALISM : AN INHERITED TRADITION

AFTER many varied experiences in the British Colonies, (while attempting to claim equality of status for Indians and to represent the Indian position of racial equality before my own countrymen) I have been carried forward almost imperceptibly, step by step, to the conclusion, that the goal of Indian freedom lies outside the British Empire. To arrive at such a conclusion has been no easy thing for me. It has represented the complete transformation of the thoughts and hopes of my early days,—the hopes, with which I came out to India itself, nearly eighteen years ago.

No one could have set out from England with higher expectations than I did. My inherited tradition with regard to the British Rule was a high one. My father belonged

to the old conservative school in politics, which regarded the British Empire established abroad as almost divine in its foundation, and as likely to lead, through righteous administration to the relief of the miseries and evils of the world. The unity of the British Empire was a sovereign thought with him; he would have died for it. British Rule in India was regarded by him as a sacred trust given to England by God Himself. He used to tell me, with glowing enthusiasm, how nobly England had fulfilled that trust, and what benefits had been conferred thereby on India itself. Therefore, although I came out to India originally as a missionary, yet, at the same time, there was always the idea present at the back of my mind, that India was, as my father had taught me, a sacred trust committed into the hands of Englishmen, and that by the fulfilment of that trust, Great Britain would stand or fall. I know that there seems something patronising and even pharisaical about such a position. I can feel it now acutely. But I can assure my readers, that my father was no Pharisee. His heart was full of love for all mankind. He inherited

a tradition in these matters,—just as I did originally myself. Even at this later date, I would say frankly, that I am thankful for my father's teaching: it remains still deep in my mind and heart. But I now read it in the terms of Indian Independence.

While this was my actual upbringing, my own experience since, during many long and arduous journeys, has convinced me that the Colonial Empire of Great Britain is entirely different from that which my father imagined it to be. It believes strongly in 'white' race domination. Such a dominance of one race over all others is by no means a sacred trust from God: it is rather a sordid commercial conquest and exploitation, in which process the 'white' race prejudice forms an important and integral part. Again and again, I have been buoyed up with ardent hopes, that this lower side was a passing phase; that it would die out, as the higher culture came in. But I have watched, at close quarters, the rigid determination of Englishmen to create at all costs, a 'white' dominion, from which coloured races shall be, as far as possible, excluded. I have seen how this determined effort has

been based on the law of self-preservation, and how it has become inseparably mingled with the clamorous demand for the protection of the honour of the 'white' women. I have watched how this sentiment has gone far beyond the colonial empire of Great Britain, and has led to the increasing brutality of negro persecution in the United States of America. This 'white' race religion, as I have often called it, has thus appeared to me, during my travels, to have become an incorrigible passion of the lower Anglo-Saxon mind, having all the fanaticism of a baser cult. I have seen it spreading its infection like some poisonous disease, or some noxious weed.

Now, I know for certain, that the British colonial will not allow the Indian to be near him on the terms of racial equality, except where the Indians are so few in their numbers, that for all practical purposes they do not count at all. To show how overwhelmingly strong this fixed determination of 'white' race domination is, I will make an acknowledgment. I have found myself again and again, when in despair of the argument of justice and equality, pleading with my own fellow-countrymen on

the ground of mere expediency.—“You have stopped all immigration”, I have said to them, “you cannot possibly be swamped by Indians coming in. Can you not treat decently the small number of domiciled Indians, who will remain in your country?” To such low levels of appeal have I found myself reduced, in those parts of the British Empire which have stopped all Indian immigration. No other arguments were possible.

This has happened so many times, that I have become sick and tired at heart. And now, at last, since the conviction of the futility of the British Empire, as it now exists, has been brought home to me; since I can see no prospects within it except that of greater and greater exploitation of other races by the Anglo-Saxon; since it appears to me, that this accumulation of racial arrogance must some day explode in a world-wide, terrible disaster, I have felt that the time has fully come, and indeed is over-due, when it is necessary to stand out against this trend of events altogether. I do not wish, for one moment longer, either by word, or deed, or even by silence, to be a participator in a ‘white’ race

supremacy, which from the bottom of my heart I detest.

I am aware that the idea of complete Indian Independence is still regarded with suspicion, even by very many Indians themselves. The outlook is too adventurous for them: it takes their breath away,—just as a boy who is a weak swimmer stands shivering on the brink before making the final plunge. The word ‘Independence’ is also tinged with a certain almost physical fear about ‘sedition.’ The fact is not realised, that the great European war has altered the meaning of the word ‘sedition’ in almost every country in the world. It is wholly legitimate to-day to regard the foreign sovereignty of the United States over the Philippine Islands as temporary, and the British protectorate over Egypt as temporary. What logical distinction is there between these instances and that of India?

To me, personally, it has been almost an inexplicable phenomenon to find in India so deeply rooted this obsession of the mind, that, whatever may be happening in other countries, the British Rule in India is permanent. I have found it among devoted Indian patriots.

and I deeply respect it where I find it ; but I confess I cannot understand it.

It is quite true that ' Independence ' is no new word or new idea. It was set forward, with the utmost bravery, in Bengal, many years ago. A band of revolutionary enthusiasts went joyfully, even to death, confident that some day their dream of Indian Independence would be realised. Their methods were often those of violence and the movement was suppressed. It was followed afterwards by a lesser and weaker claim for Home Rule under the protecting shield of the British Empire. This lesser and weaker claim, for a long time, held the field in politics. But it was never satisfactory. The truth is that even though, in outward speech, this final act of severance from the British Empire has not been prominently mentioned, the future is altogether on its side. If the present trend of event continues, it is likely to meet, sooner or later, with an almost universal acceptance,—just as the same claim for Independence in the Philippines, and in Egypt has now such a strong hold of the popular imagination in those countries, that it has the whole body of Philippines and Egyptians

behind it. The world forces are moving that way. It is impossible for India herself to lag behind.

The immediate practical reason for my publishing these articles is, that I am about to take another journey abroad to the British colonies, and I do not wish to set out under false colours. But far deeper than this is the reason I have already mentioned: I wish to stand out, with all my might and main, against this detestable religion of the supremacy of the 'white' race to which I referred above.

In spite of all the smooth and pleasing speeches at the Imperial Conference in London, last July, this frank rejection of racial equality, this 'white' race dominion, is being sedulously preached in nearly every part of the British colonial Empire. The Newspapers from New Zealand, South Africa, East Africa, reach me regularly. It has been a bitter commentary on Imperial affairs at London to find, that, even at the very same moment that complimentary speeches about India were being made by the colonial Premiers at Oxford, Glasgow and Manchester and other parts of the United Kingdom; even at the very time also that General Smuts was attempting to settle the

Irish question on the basis of racial equality,—at that moment, the absolute domination of the 'white' race was being insisted on at unanimous public meetings in East Africa, and a new immigration Act of the most humiliating character was being put into force in New Zealand, as the result of an Anti-Asiatic campaign on account of the arrival of a few more Indians than had been expected.

For the sake of clearness, I would here repeat, in a somewhat different form, the facts I have already given; for they cannot be too well known and understood. The experiences, which I have gathered at first hand in the colonies and dominions have convinced me that sooner or later the very presence of Indians is objected to by the colonials themselves. The two exceptions are (i) where Indians come in such small numbers as not to be noticed (ii) where Indians are brought over under some degrading form of indenture as a supply of cheap and conveniently docile labour.

There is, up to the present, absolutely no thought of equality. The very idea is presented by the average colonial: in prac-

tically every colony and dominion, the principle of the 'ruling white race' prevails. It is a phrase which is constantly heard on the lips, and its spirit is in men's hearts. That is the naked truth.

I feel quite certain, that, in after years, we shall all look back with wonder and ask ourselves in a bewildered manner such questions as these:—"How could we have ever held any other thought in our minds about India but that of Independence? How could we have trifled for a single moment with the idea of Home Rule as a permanent goal and end? How could we ever have regarded the the British Empire as our real home? How could we ever have considered it a worthy aim to continue for all time as an integral part of Anglo-Saxon dominion?"

In the days that are rapidly approaching, we shall be surprised and shocked that we could have acquiesced so long in the absurdly fanciful idea, that a people in Southern Asia, with a cultured past of its own and an ancient civilization, whose numbers were nearly 320,000,000 souls, could ever, by its own choice, be permanently bound to an island in

the North Sea for its protection. Historians, at some future date, may possibly tell the story how leading Indians, in their despair of conditions at home, were actually hugging the chains that fastened them to the British Empire; how they took pride in the fact that they were 'British subjects' and 'British citizens'. Historians will state truthfully that these things were happening at that very time when Indians were being treated like helots and out-castes in South Africa; when the last shreds of self respect were being stripped from domiciled Indians in Natal; when Europeans in East Africa were using threats of violence to prevent Indians from retaining land rights in the highlands of Kenya Colony. It will surely appear inconceivable to such historians, that Indians would have sunk so low in character as to boast, even in such days as these, of the fact that they were 'British'.

Now, at last, however late in the day, this strange hypnotic spell has been broken. The sense of the dignity of the Indian name, which had almost been lost under the British dominions, has been recovered. Their mediate response

to the call, which Mahatma Gandhi has made to the masses of the people of India, has been remarkable. It has shown how deep the latent feeling was in the heart of the people, if only the heart could be touched.

The political steps by which Independence may be reached are not in my province to discuss. The spiritual issues are uppermost in my own mind, and with these I shall deal at length. My object will be to show clearly, that, for the fulness of Indian personality, Independence is the only goal. My aim will be to convince my readers, that to remain permanently tied to Great Britain is contrary to the true nature of Indian culture, however valuable a temporary connection may have been.

What I am now giving to the Press is no hastily formed judgment, due to the excitement of the times in which we live. Every one of the conclusions, which follow, was formed many years ago and this manuscript has been kept for nearly a year, before publication, in order to give ample time for revision. It is my great hope, that there will be no single word, that will arouse racial bitterness; for the appeal will be to reason and to reason alone.

II

WHITE RACE SUPREMACY

I would wish to state once more, that it is not the political, but the moral and spiritual side of this great issue of Indian Independence which interests me most deeply. There is no programme I can offer as to the method by which Independence may be reached. The practical difficulties will not come under discussion. The conclusion, which I wish to make absolutely clear to all my readers, is, that Independence is the ultimate goal and none other. The reasons, put forward, may seem here and there to be sentimental, rather than practical ; but they go down to clear fundamental differences, which I shall endeavour to explain.

All my life through, I have been a scholar and a thinker and a reader of books,—eager indeed at every turn to put thought to the test of action, but constitutionally unwilling and unable to take a lead in such action, except on very rare occasions. Whenever such

occasions have arisen, I have instinctively shrunk back as quickly as possible, because I have felt the political life to be something apart from my own. It has seemed to me necessary to make this personal explanation at the outset, in order to forestall the question which immediately arises as to whether Indian independence is really practical. This issue I leave to the men of action to settle. The only question, which will be brought forward in these papers, is whether Independence is, or is not, the true goal. I am convinced that it is the true goal, the only satisfying goal. The irresistible logic of events had driven me to this conclusion. It involves, for me, the greater issue still,—an issue as wide as humanity,—the breaking down of the ‘white’ race supremacy, which I hold to be the greatest menace on earth today, and the most potent incentive, if not checked in time, to a world conflagration. It will be understood, therefore, at this early stage of the discussion, that the question is not one of politics, but of humanity.

On whichever side I look today in considering the Indian future,—on the side of

trade and commerce ; on the side of industry and labour ; on the side of social reform, religious readjustment, domestic reconstruction ; on the side of literature, art and music,—I can see the creative impulse more sustained, and the inward energy of the soul of the people more responsive, if Independence could be postulated as the goal in front of us, rather than Home Rule.

To say this, does not necessarily imply that the British connection with India in the past has been an altogether unmixed evil, though I can conceive of no more shameful beginning to any rule than the organised plunder of India by the East India Company, in the Eighteenth Century. Yet, in spite of these evil beginnings of British rule and its failure, over large areas of the Indian people, to impress itself with any moral energy, I believe, with the late Mr. Gokhale, that this British connection has had its place in Indian history in the inscrutable divine Providence.

Just as, in the healing of some chronically diseased or infirm person, there is often the need of some drastic surgical operation, of some powerful shock, in order to restore a

failing vitality, even so, it appears to me, it may have been necessary for India to receive the surgery of a foreign conquest, and the shock of a foreign culture, before she could hope to be cured of her disease or infirmity.

To take a striking parallel from European history which may bring home my meaning, the shock of the Islamic conquest and civilisation which broke upon Western Europe like a thunder storm, at the time of the Dark Ages of barbarism and ignorance, awaken a strong reaction. This shock was undoubtedly painful to Christendom, but salutary. Yet we note that Europe, as a whole, went back to its own learning after the shock was over, even in those lands which had been physically conquered for many centuries by the Arabs and the Moors. Europe has been richer not poorer, on the one hand for the shock received, and on the other hand for the subsequent independence.

In a parallel way, the shock of the Anglo-Saxon civilization came upon India in what may be called, in general terms, India's Dark Ages of the Eighteenth Century, amid the decay of the Mogul power and the internal

anarchy which followed. Even though this shock came, accompanied by all the evils of foreign conquests and foreign exploitation, yet it may have been salutary in its ultimate effect. Certainly Bengal, with its one supremely great figure of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, standing on the very threshold of the change, did react in a remarkable degree to the stimulus of the foreigner. It aroused itself thereby from torpor and decay. Historians of modern India have not been wrong in attributing this renaissance in Bengal, in the first instance, to his tremendous impact from the West.

We may heartily agree with all that I have stated and call it, along with Mr. Gokhale, providential; but to prolong the shock by endeavouring to keep India permanently within the British Empire, or to hypnotise the Indian people with smooth words against the idea of Independence, may be altogether harmful. For, to be an integral part and parcel of that Empire, bound up with it, cramped up within its boundaries, ever more and more assimilated to it, ever losing the energy of independent life, this fate will not be provi-

dential at all, but unnatural to the last degree.

What would have been the European verdict, if it had been said that Spain and Portugal under the Moors, might have received in the past Home Rule, but not Independence? Would Home Rule within the Moorish Empire has been sufficient freedom? Would the blessings of Arab civilisation, great as they were, have been sufficient compensation for Spain and Portugal's own indigenous culture? We admire it is true the Moorish architecture, which has survived; but the world would be poorer without the immortal "Don' Quixote".

In the European Middle Ages there was a striking phrase describing anything which brought stagnation upon the future,—it was called the *mortmain*, the dead hand. I have already seen the dead hand of an essentially foreign rule, such as the British rule in India must always be, laid upon many things in Indian life that were vitally precious. Art, music, poetry architecture, may for a time, it is true, be quickened into activity by the impact of a foreign culture; but the 'dead

'hand' inevitably creeps forward, if the impact is prolonged. This is really what has happened on an immensely extended scale with education in India,—that education which often goes by the name of Anglo-Vernacular. The name itself is revealing.

The same effect may be seen, as I hope to show later, upon the agricultural life of the villages of India. Changes which brought the shock of novelty have also brought the shock of destruction: and again, in this instance, we can see the dead hand creep forward. It has pained me intensely to see the deadening touch of that interference which is essentially foreign and unmeaning, upon many beautiful and natural village customs,—without anything good being given to replace that which has been taken away.

To bring this illustration to a close, I am eagerly longing to see this 'dead hand' removed from India altogether and the country once more entirely free and independent. I long to see India's own healthy and vigorous and normal life begin again, without any further stimulus or shock. I am quite certain that surgical operations, performed by the

rough instrument of foreign British rule, are now no longer necessary. The new current of indigenous life in India is running strong. It has its own direction. To apply surgery or medicines, or electric shocks from the outside, would be altogether unwholesome, and even dangerous. It would only lead to disaster.

Now; the freedom must be absolute, the Independence must be complete. There should be no merely half-way house : no remaining indolently in that intermediate state, in which all great issues become confused and the currents of life grow sluggish. The spell of weak dependence and languid indifference must be cast off. Freedom rests ultimately in the mind. No less a goal than Independence can give that freedom to the heart of India which she so passionately desires.

III

CULTURAL INCOMPATIBILITY

WHAT first rivetted my attention, as a student, when I came to India and studied the educational problem was the ultimate inconceivability in abstract thought, of a rapidly increasing multitude of people, which now numbers 320,000,000 souls, and has already an advanced civilisation of its own, ever becoming finally and completely assimilated to the thoughts and temperament of a much smaller group of people in the North Sea, who differed from Indians in climate, language, race, religion, culture, and domestic life. India, which is, in itself, a sub-continent self-contained and self-complete, could not possibly be treated merely as an appendage of an Anglo-Saxon Empire.

To put this thought in other words, Indian civilisation, which has been almost continuously productive and fertile in men of religious genius, men of intellectual vision,

men of artistic creative power, could never, by any stretch of imagination be accommodated permanently to meet the ways and means and ends of Anglo-Saxon expansion. India must pursue a path, a destiny of her own. Anglo-Saxon advance might be salutary in the vast, vacant spaces of Australia, South Africa and North America. But it would be far from salutary, if it penetrated indefinitely the densely crowded regions of Southern and Eastern Asia. The time had come to say to this Anglo-Saxon land-hunger, "Hands off!"

No! The more this thought became tenant of my mind, while I lived and worked in India, the more it settled there and would not leave me. All the time that I was wrestling with this problem, the fact was indisputable to me that 'within the Empire' must mean some kind of subordination to the central ideal of the Empire. It meant a permanent outlook towards British ends and a tendency to sacrifice the ideals of India herself, to British aims. However much the prospect of the future might be camouflaged, in order to tone down too harsh a perspective, the ultimate goal, when the words 'within the British

Empire' were kept, would be a British goal, not an Indian goal.

Even though responsibility in self-government might be given in full to Indians themselves, there would always remain this residuum of dependence, this outlook towards British ideals and British ends. Australia, Canada, New Zealand, might not feel this residuum of dependence as 'integral parts of the British Empire' because the people of those countries were kith and kin of the British people. But Indians were nothing of the kind. They were foreigners, and must always remain foreigners, in the midst of an Empire of kinsmen. If 'blood is thicker than water', then it would follow that the blood relations would combine against the outsider, the foreigner, India. Self-government, on a Dominion basis, would not mean the same for India as it would mean for Australia and Canada. India would be outvoted on almost every vital issue.

There was another fact which brought home to me this truth. The Dominions could truly call Great Britain their 'Mother Country.' They could all claim to be daughters in the Mother's house. They could expect to be

welcomed with home affection into the one family circle but when these terms began to be applied to India, they were seen at once to be absurdly unreal and impossible.

For India herself has been the Mother of civilisations. India in her age-long wisdom, has been a spiritual 'Mother' among the nations. India could never be regarded by Great Britain as a 'daughter.' The idea was too ludicrously absurd !

An Empire, if it is to have a natural, human structure, and not to be artificial, and mechanical must be an organic whole, like a body with its own living members, or a family with its own children. It cannot have an extra limb grafted on from the outside : it cannot have a stranger in the house on the same footing as the children who are related to one another by blood.

But I could find no such organic relation, no such intimate, and vital connection between India and England. Their histories were poles apart, and it had been an act of brute conquest, merely, which had brought them originally together. I could believe, that this act of conquest was providential, if it were

temporary, and for a special providential purpose, but I could not believe that it could ever force India to become an integral part of an Empire, which must always remain peculiarly and centrally British.

Even in the mere matter of numbers, the odds were against any such permanent relation; for the Indian population was enormously greater than the British. According to Euclid, the greater may always contain the less. But here (so the thought presented itself to me) we were all engaged in trying to make the less include the greater. We were making the centre of one fifth of the whole population of the world permanently fixed at London.

A very important illustration came to my mind from the United States of America. Where the Federal countries, which now compose the United States, were closely akin to one another by blood and tradition, these were each in turn incorporated, and became integral parts of the American Republic. Thus California, Texas and other new States formed with New York and Pennsylvania and the older States one integrally united Republic.

Each state, on incorporation, sent its representative to the Central Council or Senate. But when an entirely foreign country, like the Philippines, came under the jurisdiction of the United States the rulers of the Republic very wisely took no steps to make it an integral part of the United States Dominion. They regarded the conquest as temporary only, and endeavoured to give it back its independence as soon as possible. India forms an almost exact analogy to the Philippines with regard to the British Commonwealth system. It ought to be given back its independence at the earliest possible moment. It should not be asked in the meantime, to send delegates to the Imperial Cabinet in London, because it is, and must always remain, a foreigner in relation to the British Commonwealth.

I can well remember the very acute distress which I felt one day in Delhi, soon after my arrival in India, when I heard for the first time an English-educated Indian saying to me, with an air of contempt for his own native country,—“ This place is a beastly hole. I wish I were going home ! ” By ‘ home ’ he meant England. This very able young

Indian had so become inured to English dress, even in India itself, that he was wearing, when I saw him, lavender coloured gloves and a high starched collar in the hot climate of Delhi in April. Denationalization could not have gone further.

My whole soul revolted from the picture of such a denationalised existence. At first I felt a certain contempt. But, in a moment, my contempt had turned into pity. For how inwardly wretched he was ! What an outcaste ! What a pariah !

And the pity of it all lay just there that he had cut himself off from his own kith and kin. He was like a tree plucked up by the roots. He had no soil in which to grow. He could never really make England 'home' and he knew it and felt it.

Only a few moment's had passed by in my presence, when he flamed forth with burning indignation at some bitter wrong he had received at the hands of Europeans. Yes, it was pity rather than contempt that he needed ! The whole thing was a tragedy ; it was worse than physical death, with its few short moments of physical pain to be endured..

For here was *spiritual* death,—the life long agony of a tortured soul.

Often and often, since then, I have pictured in my mind that tragic figure,—with his lavender gloves and high starched collar in the heat of the middle of April in Delhi. I have said to myself, “This is false! It is an outrage on humanity! There is no truth in it! The sooner it is done away with, and a healthy, self-respecting, natural, Indian life substituted for it, the better!”

Yet, if India remains permanently incorporated within the British Empire, is there really any escape from such tragedies being multiplied, as time goes on, a thousand fold?

IV

RACIAL ARROGANCE

Up to this point, I have tried to make clear, that the immense area and population of India, with its history and tradition so different from England, make the thought of India ever becoming in reality "an integral part of the British Empire" almost inconceivable. Furthermore, while Canada and Australia and other dominions can truly look back to England as their own national home, it is quite impossible for India to do so. The retention, therefore, of India within the British Empire, permanently and integrally, cannot possibly be for India's own sake: it must be for the selfish aggrandisement of the English race. This has really been the meaning of that phrase, (which I have even heard Indians themselves quoting as if with pride) that India was "the brightest jewel in the British Crown". This constantly repeated expression

ought to bring a blush of shame to Indians instead of pride. For in reality, while the Phillippines are likely to obtain their Independence after less than thirty years of a foreign rule by the United States, more than 160 years have passed since the Battle of Plassey, and yet the goal of Independence is not even welcomed with any enthusiasm by a large number of Indians themselves. They would almost shiver at the thought.

We have seen that, if India with its 320,000,000 people, were to remain within the British Empire on terms of perfect racial equality, then it would so outbalance every other portion of that Empire by its sheer weight of numbers, that the Empire itself would have to become predominantly Indian in its character, rather than a *British* Empire. Its centre would in the course of time gravitate to Calcutta, or some other Indian capital, rather than remain in London. But, the British, themselves would never for a moment consent to an 'Indianising' of their Empire. As soon as ever such an 'Indianising' was likely to happen, the theory of racial equality would be given up, or at least be

cloaked over with all kinds of different disguises and subterfuges. Colonel Wedgwood may write about the Indo-British Commonwealth, adding the title 'Indian' to the old word 'British'. But it is not the name that matters; it is a question of facts.

We are seeing the crude facts illustrated at the present time in East Africa. The one simple reason why the British and Dutch in East Africa will never allow racial equality in that country,—just as they have never allowed it in South Africa,—is because they are in the position of an aristocracy, which insists on keeping its power. India is only six days journey from Mombasa : England is twenty days distant. Every year the number of Indian settlers is increasing. Therefore, the 'white' settlers are crying out for a 'white' East Africa, as they feel themselves outnumbered. There can be little doubt that they will have full sympathy from the other provinces in Africa where the English rule. The 'white' settlers would rather leave the country altogether than submit to live side by side, on equal terms, with Indians whom they despise.

It is sometimes asserted that this 'white' race supremacy has become less arrogant and insistent since the great European War. I wish I could see signs of this. What I have observed with my own eyes is exactly the reverse. In Africa, at least, the spirit of the 'white' race has grown more arrogant, not less. There is no lesson of the war, which has been more neglected and despised by the Anglo Saxon race, than that of respect for the non-European races of mankind. Wherever I have travelled, I have noticed, what I can only call a stiffening and hardening of the barriers which separate the 'white' race from all other races. An even more striking illustration of this may be given from parts which I have not visited. For the most sober papers in the United States continually regret the recrudescence of lynch law and fanaticism against the coloured people since the time of the Great War.

While I have been trying to work out this problem of racial arrogance, and to find some solution, I have studied the history of other countries, which have suffered the same fate as India, and

was true, in India, concerning the Moghal Empire, just as to-day it is proving true about the British Empire.

I would again point out, that this does not mean that foreign conquest is always immediately a disaster. The reign of Akbar was an untold blessing to India. The rule of the United States in the Philippines has been unquestionably a blessing in morden times. But, to *prolong* a foreign rule appears invariably to lead to disaster. And the whole controversy with England at the present time is, that its rule in India has lasted too long.

I need not dwell upon the different evils, that are certain to arise, when subjection has eaten into the soul of the people. They are only too well known. There is a slow undermining of the very foundations of truth and honesty and fearlessness of character. This is caused by the fear, implanted by the foreign rule and its arbitrary punishments and rewards. Everything is to be gained by facile accommodation and flattery. Perhaps it would be true to say that all educated Indians have felt, deep down in their own characters, these vicious effects of foreign rule upon the

truthfulness of their own lives. No material benefits can compensate for such losses in the inward life. Even the somewhat exaggerated expression of courage and plain speaking, that is now so often met with in the younger generation, has something strained about it. It is hardly yet the simple natural courage of the man, who has been free from his very birth and has known nothing else but freedom.

The more I studied Sir John Seeley's sentence, and then recapitulated to myself the facts of my own experience in India and the colonies, the more clearly I saw that foreign rule does actually lead to the subservient mind, and only the very few, who are able to rise above outward circumstances by the inner power of the spirit, can remain untarnished by its evils. This is a final fact of experience. It is true of the average man.

However much, therefore, "Home Rule within the British Empire" might be substituted for the present despotic power of the Viceroy and Council, I was quite certain, as an Englishman,—knowing my countrymen, as no Indian could possibly understand them,—that there would always be some residuum of

subjection in India's position ; some remaining mark of dependence ; some patronage from the imperial centre ; something wholly foreign, and not Indian at all. And such dependence and patronage, however disguised and kept out of sight, would perpetually lead to that national deterioration, which Seeley has described.

I could not bear the thought of this. Often and often, in the silence of the night, I have pondered deeply over Christ's words : " Whatsoever yet would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them ; for this is the Law of the Prophets."

While I have meditated, I have said to myself again and again, in silence,—“ How can you, an Englishman, who love your own freedom and independence, as an Englishman, refuse to allow the very same freedom and the very same independence to every Indian ? ”

I had no answer to that question, except to acknowledge the truth it contained. If this independence, which is every Englishman's birthright, had made my own life free and fearless, what right had I to enslave others ? No ! By every sacred precept of my own.

Christian religion, I was bound to strive ardently for the removal of every hindrance, which should stand in the way of those Indians among whom I was living, my friends and companions and brothers. I ought to prevent them from being deprived of that precious gift of freedom and fearlessness, which I myself had enjoyed as my own second nature and age-long inheritance as an Englishman.

Thus, in times of quiet thought, when all was still and silent around me, the iron of India's subjection,—a subjection which did not begin with British domination, though it had become accentuated thereby,—entered into my own soul, and I longed to receive strength never to add to it by any act of my own, but rather, night and day, to strive to remove it.

It was in very early days, while these thoughts were present with me, that there came one of those sudden revelations of the truth, which are given like a flash from time to time. There had been, in the year 1907, at Aligarh, a dispute between the students and the European staff. This had led to extreme bitterness.

Then, a sudden action on the part of the European Principal had provoked a College strike. The students refused to go back until their wrongs were righted. Early one morning at Delhi, Moulvi Nazir Ahmed and Munshi Zaka Ullah, whom I revered most deeply for their singular beauty of character, came to me, with tears in their eyes, to tell me that the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh, which was the one darling treasure of their hearts in their old age, was on the point of ruin. They asked me to come with them to Aligarh itself. We went together and I could feel, without a word being said, the outraged spirit of the students,—their resentment, their sense of humiliation, their feelings of injustice. During that very night, when we were present at Aligarh, it flamed forth in a literal deed. For the insulted students burnt their college furniture,—their beds and mattresses, their tables and books. The flames mounted to the skies. They were a symbol of the student's own flaming indignation. After the strike was all over, and the students had gone back, and the disturbance was at an end, I asked from Moulvi Nazir Ahmed, what words of advice he

had spoken to the students. He told me, that he had said to them as follows:—

“You are slaves. What can slaves do? Get back to your books and work. You are not free men, but slaves”.

These terrible words of the Moulvi Sahib whom I passionately loved, haunted me like an evil dream. Was that all the counsel he was able to give these young men at the very opening of their lives. Was that in very truth these students' true position? Were they slaves? The more I thought over it, the more I found that the words of the Moulvi Sahib had truth in them. This foreign subjection was a servitude of the soul, more insidious perhaps than any outward slavery, and none the less literally true. However much it might be disguised by a pleasing exterior, the true fact remained. If any one of these brilliant young students went to other parts of the British Empire, they would not be allowed to land. And even here, in India, they must flatter and fawn and beg for favours if they would get office.

I went over and over again, in mind, Sir John Seeley's maxim, which I had just discover-

ed,—“Subjection for a long time to a foreign yoke is one of the most potent causes of national deterioration.” The words “for a long time” stuck in my own mind. I said to myself,—“This clearly must not go any longer. For already, the period since the English came, as foreign rulers, is far too long a time for a country like India to be subject to a foreign power. Added to that, there have also been centuries of foreign subjection before the British advent. *This period of subjection must be ended.*” It was not long after this, that the central thought of Indian Independence became firmly established in my mind. I have tested it since by a hundred experiences abroad, but it has stood the test.

It is true, that, since the days when the Moulvi Sahib gave his advice to those Aligarh students great strides have been taken in the direction of the Indian Home Rule. Events, that no one at that time believed to be possible, have happened in a single year. But the fact remains, nevertheless, that over a large area of the Indian population the subservient mind continues. For my own part, I can see no practical end to it, as long as India remains

merely that, which the August Proclamation, of 1917, declares it to be, namely, "an integral part of the British Empire".

V

HYPOCRISY AND EDUCATION

I have given in the last chapter a story relating an event, which happened in my own life, and brought home to me with terrible force the true facts concerning India's yoke under a foreign rule. Another event happened shortly afterwards, which drove still deeper into my heart the iron wound of this subjection and made me understand its meaning, even more unmistakably than I had done hitherto. I was at Allahabad, in the year 1908, and I had already made there many friends among leading barristers and pleaders. Late one evening, we were seated talking together about the condition of the country. When it was past midnight, and the talk had gone forward with the utmost freedom, one of my friends (who is now dead) said to me,—"All of us here are obliged to meet every day, officially, the government officers who are Englishmen. We cannot speak to them

openly. We have to say one thing to them, and another thing among ourselves," I was startled and shocked at his statement and said to him,—“Do you mean to say this goes on all day long?” He replied,—“Yes, all day long and every day of our lives.” The rest of those who were present corroborated his words. They told me that such a double life was inevitable, under foreign rule, unless a man was a saint, or a ‘mahatma’.

One further instance, of a different kind, occurred not long after, which opened my eyes still further. I was coming one day through the Kashmir Gate, when one of our college Professors, who was a brave and good man, met me, in a state of great indignation at a cruel wrong he had just witnessed. On the college cricket ground, which was close at hand, a brutal policeman had assaulted a sweet-meat seller, and when this Professor had protested, the policeman had summoned two other police-men to his aid, who happened to be passing by, and the three of them together had kicked with their heavy boots the sweet-meat seller, while he was lying on the ground. They had also assaulted

my friend himself. I asked my friend, who was still in a white heat of indignation, to come with me at once to the Deputy Commissioner and report the matter. But he refused. The police, he said, were part of the foreign system, and they were also a close corporation protected by the foreign Government. He might be able, with my help, to get justice in this case, but he would be a marked man in the future. And as sure as night followed day some charge would be brought up against him, in order to take revenge; and the foreign government would never throw over their own underlings, by means of whom they keep their power and control. "Mr. Andrews," he said to me, "you may think me a coward, but you, as an Englishman, have no idea what this police system, under a foreign Government, means to Indians. The police loot the people right and left with absolute impunity. They take to themselves all the power, which is in the hands of the English, and then abuse it. And every subordinate government official, under this foreign rule, does the same."

My next line of thought, in this matter

of a permanent remaining within the British Empire, was in a different direction. I began to see, as a foreigner, in a foreign country, what a predominant part geography and climate play in fashioning national life. While I firmly believe, that human nature is the same all the world over, and that isolated individuals, by spiritual conquest, can acclimatise themselves to any surroundings, I can also see that this unnatural effort is not required by God from whole peoples. They can best fulfil their own place in the divine Providence and Order of the world, by remaining true to their highest nature in their own climatic surroundings, eliminating more and more the passions of the brute. They are not called upon to go outside their nature. They are meant by God to correspond naturally and simply to the climate and soil from whence they sprang just as a flower grows best in its own congenial soil.

Yet, if India were to remain indefinitely within the British Empire, as an integral part of its structure, the result inevitably would be, that the whole system and climate-(as it were) of life, which was temperamentally suited to

the Briton in his cold, sunless Northern Islands, would be imposed, in a greater or lesser degree, upon the Indian, who lives for his whole life within the belt of the world's greatest heat and under its most powerful sunshine. This would surely lead, more and more to a distrust warping and distorting of both the Indian character itself, and also of the Indian system and manner of life.

We can easily see, even to-day, how restless and dissatisfied modern educated Indians have often become, on account of English acclimatisation. In their case, however, there is a reason for this, because, with those who enter the larger world of men and things a certain amount of accommodation may be necessary. But it would be fatally unnatural if this artificially acquired temperament of accommodation penetrated the masses of the Indian population, who never have any need to change their habits to meet changes of environment. For the very beauty of their village lives, as they are lived at present, lies in the fact that they are so intimately close to nature and in harmony with their surroundings. Their life has found its unity.

It would be fatally useless for them to adopt all kinds of strange western habits, utterly unsuited to their environment, merely because of the facile imitation of a subservient race, which tries to copy its rulers even in things that are injurious.

Thus it will be seen, from what I have written very briefly and imperfectly, how this question of climate and environment made me feel more and more clearly every day the unnaturalness of the British rule if it were to be regarded as a permanent factor in Indian life. The first stimulating effect of contact with a new civilisation would soon pass away and the inevitable reaction would be sure to follow, if the same shock from outside were still further applied. Indian life, would be, more and more, forced into artificial ways. Just as a man is utterly uncomfortable, if he has to be dressed up in hot, unsuitable, tight and badly fitting clothes; just as he then finds himself perspiring and longing to throw off the tight dress and to clothe himself in simpler garments, even so the people of India would become restless and uncomfortable while adopting new foreign habits

and the situation would at last become intolerable.

I can give an example of this from my own experience. While living among the boys at Shantiniketan, it has been a great comfort to me to wear the simple loose Indian dress which is exactly suited to the climate. I have got so used to this, that it has become a second nature to me to wear it. I can, hardly describe the discomfort of being obliged to change this dress, and to put on the tight fitting English dress, when I go to visit Europeans in Calcutta, who would be shocked if I appeared before them in an Indian dress.

The truth is, that the whole British system, with its cast-iron method has been imposed upon India in the world of politics. This pressure of foreign habits goes much further than the sphere of government, with such a people as the Indian people, who are so easily moved by external forces. Every market shows the useless foreign articles offered for sale. One can see it also in the houses themselves, where hideous oleographs of vulgar European art often bedeck the walls.

In the mansions of the great, in India, the taste is even more glaringly distasteful. Furniture of an utterly useless type crowds the rooms, covered perpetually in baize cloth and making the whole house stuffy and full of dust. The sense of coolness, which comes from a room where furniture is reduced to a minimum, is altogether lost. It is impossible to describe the utter waste of money in such houses, and also the miserable vulgarity of the effect. I have said to myself, again and again, that this foreign rule had become like the old man in the Arabian Nights, clinging round Sinbad the Sailor's neck and dragging him down to destruction. There is still time to throw off the evil. But the need for Independence has become day by day more pressing and imperative.

This question of environment and climate leads on, by an obvious sequence of thought, to the far more fundamental question of the education of the young. This has been my own special interest both in England and in India. Coming out from England nearly eighteen years ago, where education and environment had become in a great measure

one organic whole, especially in the older public schools and universities, it was an almost intolerable burden to me to find out by painful experience what an utterly unassimilated thing the foreign 'English' education in India was, and how the foreign rule itself was using the sacred cause of education as a propaganda of the glories and excellences of British rule. My own experience in St. Stephen's College, Delhi, revealed to me the fact, that a foreign government, such as the British government in India, cares very little indeed for education itself, as a search for truth, as a training of inner character, as an end rather than as a means. The foreign government inevitably gravitates towards making the education of the young a tool and an instrument for advancing its own politics even at the expense of truth.

Soon after my arrival in India, when once my own radical views had become known, an amusing experience of government intervention in strictly educational matters for its own political ends occurred to me. I will relate it in order to illustrate my point. While I was engaged in teaching in the Punjab Uni-

versity, the Vice-Chancellor expressed to me his great desire that I should become a member of the Syndicate. I had had some knowledge of the method of conducting 'Honours' courses, while teaching at Cambridge before coming out to the Punjab; the Vice-Chancellor, therefore, wished me to help him in starting Honours' courses for the B.A. in the Punjab University. Nevertheless, though, he put my name forward again and again, the Lieutenant Governor always refused to nominate me as a Fellow, because of my radical opinions. Yet I could not be elected to the Syndicate, until I had been made a Fellow. Therefore I could do no useful work, such as the Vice-Chancellor desired, until the Lieutenant Governor changed his mind and made me a Fellow. It is interesting to note also that I could become a Fellow in no other way than by the Lieutenant Governor's nomination.

Then, one day, in an idle moment, while Mr. Ramsay Macdonald was staying with me, at Delhi, I related to him the story of the Lieut. Governor's refusal, on political grounds, to appoint me. He was naturally indignant at an abuse of power which could never have

happened in free England. Without telling me anything about it, he related this incident in his book "The Awakening of India". The result was that something happened at the India Office, where Lord Morley was Secretary. The Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab hurriedly appointed me a Fellow and I was duly elected on the Syndicate. This is only a slight and somewhat humourous example of what is happening every day. The matter may be put in a simple phrase, Education under a foreign government is used for political ends. But there is something far worse than this political use of Education by Government officials. In India, as I have heard time after time from the very best students, the suspicion has been created far and wide among them that some of their fellow students are spies, in the pay of the C.I.D. This suspicion is founded on an imposing array of facts and I have no doubt in my own mind that it is true. For this reason the whole atmosphere of education is tainted with hypocrisy and lies. I know no other country, (except possibly that of Russia under the Czar) in which education has been so tainted with fear and

suspicion as that of India. The whole of this system of espionage, carried on in the schools and colleges of India, through the agency of the students themselves, as tools of the Police, is disgraceful. It has meant the prostitution of true education to serve the foreign government. It has shown unmistakably that the government is foreign through and through and cannot trust the people. It rather trusts its own paid agents, who have sold their conscience and have taken up the profession of spies. But the evil goes deeper when a political bias is given in the schools and colleges even to the subjects taught and to the character of the curriculum itself. The teachers, who have their own private political ideas,—not unfrequently of an extreme ‘national’ character—are expected to teach history with a view to upholding and supporting the British Raj. They are therefore to teach lip-loyalty. Hypocrisies of every kind are carried on. The double life of the teacher is imparted to the pupils. For the pupils quickly learn from their teachers to give lip service to government, on special occasions. They begin from their earliest days, to repeat ‘loyal’ phrases which

do not come from the heart and are not sincerely believed, either by teacher or taught.

I have in mind a contrast between two schools, which came under my own notice. At Shantiniketan, where I now have the privilege of teaching, the atmosphere of education is as free as the air we breathe and as the light of heaven which gives us gladness. There is confidence and trust. Whatever is in the heart comes out in speech. I went from Shantiniketan one day to give away the prizes at a neighbouring school, on their annual Prize Day. Here, from first to last, I felt the pressure amounting almost to compulsion, brought to fear, by Inspectors and others, upon the poor, weak men who were teachers, to lead a double life in order to please Government and to get an increase in Government grants. It was a pitiable mockery, to see two little children, with their hands straight down by their sides and their faces blankly unintelligent, reciting in English, (which they could not understand) 'God save our gracious King.' I am sure the last person in the world who would wish to be so doubtfully honoured would be King George himself.

I have maintained in times past and would still maintain, that the wide-spread teaching of English was of great benefit in the past to the higher education of India and to the progress of the country. It has been one of the most potent means of giving that shock, or stimulus, which India needed at one time in her history to rouse her out of sleep. It has given ideals of political freedom and of national unity, which have been invaluable. But while I say this with all my heart, I cannot help but see what dangers now lie ahead of India owing to the dislocation and unnaturalness of life itself, and the divorce between the English-educated men (who are forming a class by themselves) and the agricultural and town labourers. I paid a visit to Japan, some years ago, and studied higher education there. I am quite certain, that the progress, which Japan has made, is in a very great measure due to the fact, that the medium of instruction has been from a very early date, the mother tongue of the country, and not English. This has kept the Japanese life vigorous at its centre. But it is only fair to add, that Japan started its modern career with a much smaller popu-

lation than India, and with only one mother tongue for all her people. Its language problem was simpler.

I could not blame the foreign government for what has been done, any more than I would blame the people of India. The teaching of children through the medium of English was probably inevitable, so long as the government of the country was in the hands of foreigners. There has also been hitherto (as far as I am able to judge) a strange balance of advantages and disadvantages. It is useless, therefore, to cry over what has already been done. But the future of India, now that the shock and stimulus has been given, demands a return at all points to the mother tongue of each great Province and the teaching of all subjects (except English itself) through the mother-tongue. Nevertheless, though this is the educational requirements it is almost inconceivable in the present circumstances that such a vital change as this can take place, unless India, more and more, ceases to be an 'integral part of the British Empire' :

I have sketched, in a very imperfect manner, the mere outline of a vast subject. Far

more deeply than any need of political, or of economic freedom, India is feeling the need of educational freedom to-day. It is not sufficient to substitute Indian officials for Europeans, in the Education Department. That alone can accomplish very little. The mentality of the people themselves has to be changed; for they have come to believe, that, in the knowledge of English lies the one pathway of material advancement. It is for this reason, that villagers will starve themselves and the other members of their family, in order that one son, at least, may get the very doubtful advantage of 'English' education.

When law courts, government offices, business firms, post, telegraph, etc. all use the mother tongue, as is invariably the case in Japan, then and then only will this unhealthy craving for 'English' cease.

But, as I have said before, this change can never whole-heartedly be effected, so long as the ultimate goal in view is, that India should remain 'an integral part of the British Empire'. That goal itself must be altered. Just as in the case of the Philippines, even so in India, Independence, and nothing short of Independence, must be the final aim.

VI

INDIA AND THE EMPIRE

I am fully aware that my discussion of the problem of educational freedom in the last chapter was inadequate even as an outline. The subject is so complex, that it would require to be considered at far greater length to do justice to it. I turn back again and again in my mind to the many years which I passed at St. Stephen's College, Delhi, with high hopes and ardent educational ideals. But since I have come out of that work to an institution where educational freedom is the very breath of life, I can understand, even if I cannot briefly explain, the difference between a purely indigenous and independent development and a dependence on a foreign outlook at every point in educational matters.

The one form of dependence which we still feel in Shantiniketan, along with the rest of India, is this. Our boys have to earn their living, as soon as they go from school;

and this means, in a vast proportion of instances, the necessity to go into Government service for the purpose of supporting their families. Even if these services are made Indian through and through, I still wonder and doubt if the foreign outlook can be eliminated, so long as India remains an "integral part of the British Empire."

I had a still further experience in India, while the years passed, one by one, and as I travelled in different parts of the vast Indian continent. The poverty of India came over my whole life, more and more, like a heavy cloud which covers the sky and obscures the sunlight from the eyes. I went, from time to time into famine-stricken districts, and also I visited constantly the homes of the outcasts. There I often watched the hollow faces of those who have never had enough even to eat. Only very slowly the whole picture dawned upon me,—what it means,—the hunger, the squalour, the fear of man for his fellow man, the servile and semi-servile condition. It came home to me that this was the lot of fifty to sixty millions of my own brothers and sisters. There came to my knowledge, at

the same time, how this very poverty was being ruthlessly exploited, on the one hand it was exploited by Indians themselves, and on the other hand by the rich and powerful profiteers of the West. I could see the new standards of luxury and comfort, which were set up by the British occupation. As these were adopted and imitated by the upper surface of Indian society they were bound to drive the poverty of India still deeper. It is bad enough to be exploited by one's own countrymen, to be oppressed by one's own neighbours,—and the millions of the 'untouchables' of India tell that tale in a language of misery, that he who runs may read,—but, to be exploited again and again, on the top of this, by powerful foreigners was altogether intolerable. It was to add misery to misery. I could not satisfy myself, in any slightest degree, that this age-long poverty and misery of India was decreasing under the British domination. There were a thousand things which told me the very opposite story. And there was one thing concerning which there could be, sadly enough, no open question. The British rulers of India had brought with

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them, an expensive standard of living. This new economic standard had pervaded the country districts. It had upset the whole economic basis of life. On this account, the *pain* of Indian poverty had been increased in proportion as the number of human wants had been multiplied. The foreign economic invasion, which was ever growing and expanding, was in reality nothing more nor less than the exploitation of the weak by the strong. If India remained within the British Empire, as an integral part of that Empire, this foreign economic invasion and exploitation would never cease. It would become perpetual. The drain of wealth out of India would never end. The effect of this upon the helpless and disorganised and semi-servile peasantry would be, to fix deeper the poverty and misery and debt, while at the same time increasing enormously the standard of living. All the evils of the old factory system in England (which prayed upon the helpless and the weak) would be repeated in India on a far vaster scale.

An example of what might always happen, whenever a 'ring' or 'corner' could be made by powerful capitalists working hand

in hand together, has only recently come to my knowledge in Bengal. Though this special incident came later in my experience, I will repeat it here; for it is typical of what is constantly occurring. A Jute Mill, which I shall not name, was started by foreign capitalists in 1904. Up till the beginning of the war, the shares rose from 100 to 145, and the profits reached between 15 p.c. and 20 p.c., after considerable sums had been placed to 'reserves'. Just before the war the ryot, who grew the jute under exclusively hard conditions of labour in malaria-stricken districts, obtained thirteen to fourteen rupees per maund for this jute. During last year, however, although the cost of living for the cultivator had enormously increased, the price of jute has been driven down to five to six rupees per maund; while the shares of Jute Mill have gone up from 145 before the war, to 1160; and the profits (after setting aside the reserves of every kind) have been declared at 160 p.c. It is no wonder, under such conditions, that the influx of foreign capital and the permanence of a foreign suzerainty, are not welcomed.

But the evil does not stop, even with the introduction of such British exploiting firms from the West. The Western methods of gambling and speculating on the Stock Exchange, of 'rings' and 'corners' and monopolies' and 'trusts', which have assumed such sinister proportions in modern Western business, have been imported bodily into India itself: and the clever mechanical brains of many Indians of the merchant classes have enabled them to pursue these practices to the extreme limit of anti-social selfishness. I heard, for instance, of a Marwari in Calcutta, who had actually bought up, as a speculation, all the bricks for building round Calcutta, and had raised the price of building material by 200 p.c.? The figures given to me may be exaggerated; but the story made me wonder with a despairing anxiety and fear, whether all the extreme evils of modern capitalism were to be introduced, in the train of British rule, and how long this system, which had before been foreign to India on so large a scale, was to go on ever widening and increasing into disruption of Indian life and culture.

Amid all these varied arguments which have now been put forward, the final position I have been obliged to take has come, not from any theory, but from the hard logic of facts. Above all, the truth of the evil of foreign subjection has been brought home to me, as I have shown, from a most bitter and painful personal experience of what the words 'within the British Empire' really imply to the majority of Indians abroad. I have seen now, in every part of the world, what these conditions of life abroad are; what they imply to an Indian, simply because he is an Indian and not a European. I have tried my utmost to retain a favourable impression, whenever facts would in any way support it. But the conclusion, that has been forced upon me, is this. India can never, as things are at present, have an honoured seat and place of welcome within the colonies of the British Empire. The anti-Asiatic sentiment is against it. That sentiment is growing stronger year by year. It is hardening its surface of exclusiveness, with all the fanaticism of an irrational superstition. There can be no effective compromise with it from the Indian side and

no appeal to reason. It must run its course, as other irrational superstitions and base human passions have done; perhaps it is the greatest anti-social menace of the present age. To think of an equal status for Indians in such a British Empire is an hallucination. It is an hallucination which is growing more and more fantastic every year. The shock of awakening must soon come to every Indian. It has come to me, before it has come to others because I have travelled so many journeys and have met so many people in the British colonies themselves. If all thinking Indians had had my own personal experience, I can hardly imagine them remaining unconvinced of the hard realism of my position,—that India has no vital place within the colonies of the British Empire, on those terms which alone are thinkable, viz; the terms of perfect equality of status.

My own mind had been fascinated for a long time with the idea, that the British Empire might lead on directly to the 'Parliament of Man'. But I have seen with my own eyes, in real life, that it is leading on to nothing of the kind. I have found out by an

experience (which has been almost tragically painful in its disillusionment) that the 'Parliament of man' cannot come about by means of 'Empires' at all. The last Great War, with its world convulsion, has really brought to an end this outworn theory of 'Empires'. The British 'Empire' is not going to be the only exception. Empires must perish today as they have perished in the past, in order that free peoples may survive and realise their freedom. We have a signal instance of the fallacy of the 'imperial' idea in Italy and Austria. Last century, the subjection of Italy to Austria in one Empire made spiritual unity impossible. The Austrian Empire, with its Italian appendage, was a monstrosity. But now the relations between Italy and Austria have changed. Italy has come nobly to the help of Austria, in the hour of her greatest distress; and a spiritual unity is being found today, which is obliterating centuries of hate. The truth is, that the British Empire with its Indian appendage, is also a monstrosity. If the present unnatural relation between England and India continues, it can only lead, as it has done at

such a rapid pace already to a continually increasing bitterness on both sides. But if the bond of subjection is finally and ultimately unloosed, then mutual respect may succeed to mutual hate.

I have received many letters recently from Indians in Europe, who have lived both in England and France. All, without exception, told me, that friendly relations with the French people are easy and natural and simple, because there is no question of 'Empire' looming up on every occasion between Indians and Frenchmen. But, in England, relations are becoming every day more strained and unnatural because of the perpetual factor of British Imperialism, which taints at the very source this springs of friendship. I have stated in these articles some of the reasons which have led me, an Englishman, so completely to change my original view as to the relation of the British Empire towards India. I am confident in my own mind that my own countrymen will ultimately reach the same stand point. It is of great interest to notice, how one group of solid thinkers, who so ably edit the "Round

Table Quarterly" and maintain on each number such a high standard of intellectual honesty of thought, have, from the first, been puzzled by the position of India within the Empire. They appear to be able to find no solution to the Indian problem. Whenever the subject of India has been brought forward, its incongruity with the self-governing dominions has become more and more obvious. I believe that the irresistible logic of facts is drawing these writers, even against their will to something very nearly corresponding to the position which I myself have been compelled to take up.

There remains a small group in India, of advanced social thinkers, who are conscious of the past benefit to India of the British connexion in breaking down hard social conventions and age-long religious superstitions. They have also all high humanitarian ideal of the federation of all races. They detest the common bigotry of 'nationalism'. I need hardly state, at this point, that I have every possible sympathy with these, and value their Judgment, in this matter, far more than that of others. But, as I have already said I believe

that more and more it will be made evident that the facts of history are against the 'Empire' theory of human advance. I believe also that the treatment of Indians in the British colonies will finally convince them, that Indians can have no honourable place, consistent with true self-respect, in an Empire where such treatment of Indians is not only un-rebuked and un-punished, but has become the normal aspect of life and the incorrigible attitude of wide-spread fanatical religion.



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